

ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS
AT THE
INSPECTION
OF
THE NEW HOSPITAL
FOR THE
TREATMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES,

*LECTED AT BELVIDERE BY THE MAGISTRATES AND
TOWN COUNCIL OF GLASGOW.*

5TH DECEMBER 1877

GLASGOW
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EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF THE MAGISTRATES AND COUNCIL
OF GLASGOW (POLICE—STATUTE LABOUR—SANITARY), 10th
December, 1877:—

“The Report of the opening of the New Permanent Hospital,
“Belvidere, was read and approved of, and it was agreed that the
“remarks of all the speakers on the occasion should be printed
“along with Bailie Ure’s address.”

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5TH DECEMBER, 1877.

The new permanent Hospital for the Treatment of Infectious Diseases, erected on the estate of Belvidere, was visited and inspected on 5th December by the Lord Provost, the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee, together with the Magistrates and other Members of the Town Council of Glasgow; the Chairmen and Inspectors of the various Parochial Boards, the Chairmen of the two Infirmaries, the President of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons (Dr. Andrew Buchanan), and other gentlemen interested in such institutions, were also present. The party drove out from the City Chambers, and after a minute inspection of the whole premises, assembled in one of the pavilions. After luncheon, Bailie Ure, Chairman of the Committee of Health, spoke as follows :—

“ It would be out of place on my part to propose success to the Hospital, for that could only mean that some cause should exist amongst the community for its use, which none of us desires to see—(applause)—but on behalf of the Health Committee I thank the gentlemen present for favouring us with their presence at the opening of this the first permanent Hospital which the Municipal Authorities of Glasgow have erected. I do not require to remind you that this is not the first Hospital which we have had. You have only to look a little way southward to observe quite a village of pavilions, the first of which was erected under great pressure seven

years ago. Under the Nuisance Removal (Scotland) Act, 1856, certain extraordinary powers were conferred upon Local Authorities for the 'prevention and mitigation of diseases under Order in Council.' Among these was the power to provide 'for the dispensing of medicines, and for affording to persons afflicted by or threatened with epidemic, endemic, or contagious diseases, such medical aid and such accommodation as may be required.' These provisions were incorporated in the Glasgow Police Act of 1862. There are three things to observe about these powers—(1) that they are extraordinary—only obtained under epidemic pressure by special Order of Privy Council; (2) that they are temporary, and require to be renewed every few months; (3) that they are entirely permissive—nevertheless, out of these very defective legislative provisions sprang our present Hospitals. Dr. Gairdner was appointed chief Medical Officer of Health in 1863, and was assisted in the discharge of his duties by the five District Surgeons of Police, and a small staff of Sanitary inspectors acted under them. The Sanitary officials at first helped in the Hospital treatment of the cases of infectious diseases which they discovered, by quickening the action of the Parochial Authorities, and facilitating the getting of orders for the Infirmary. But it soon became apparent that this method was uncertain, and often led to delay. Besides, there were a large proportion of the infected who were not paupers at all, or who were only so under the temporary pressure of the fever, &c. For these partial provision was for a time made by giving orders for the Royal Infirmary, or one or other of the Parochial Hospitals, at the cost of the Police Board. For a time the public necessities were all met by these expedients, but the accommodation was at best uncertain, and a large number of the sick absolutely refused to go to Parochial Hospitals who would willingly have gone to any other. When, therefore, in 1864, the Sanitary Committee found itself face to face with an epidemic of typhus, whose severity may be inferred from the fact that it carried off 2700 persons in that and the following year, it became evident that the special powers to erect temporary Hospitals conferred by the Police Act, 1862, must be employed. Accordingly a site was acquired, and a pavilion Hospital containing 136 beds was rapidly run up, and opened on the 25th April, 1865, on what was then cor-

rectly described as 'an open and airy space north of Parliamentary Road.' We were most fortunate in securing the services of Dr. Russell as Physician and Medical Superintendent, under whose direction the whole organization of the Hospital was in an incredibly short space of time put in perfect working order. So useful was this small Hospital found by the Sanitary Committee, and the benefits to the community of having accommodation which was at the command of the Sanitary staff, without the intervention of other boards or authorities, were so marked, that after prolonging its existence by renewing the Privy Council Order from time to time, the Police Board made it a permanent charge, and took powers in the New Police Act of 1866, section 266, to build and maintain it and other hospitals also. In 1869 another epidemic of typhus compelled the Board to acquire more land to the north of the Hospital off Parliamentary Road, and increase the accommodation to 250 beds. In 1870 relapsing fever reached the city, and soon all our accommodation was taken up. A sub-committee appointed to consider the question reported in September that another site should be looked for on which the nucleus of a permanent Fever Hospital could be erected. This was agreed upon, and during that and the following month many sites were visited, and the aid of a Medical Committee, consisting of the President of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, with three others, and the medical officers of the Board was obtained. The ultimate issue of the matter was this, that at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Board of Police, on the motion of Lord Provost Arthur, this property of Belvidere was purchased for £17,000, reduced into a ground annual at 4 per cent. The extent of the estate is about 33 acres. There was no time to prepare elaborate plans, or build an Hospital of permanent materials. Beds were urgently required. The contractor entered the stubble-field to the east, where the wooden sheds are still in use, on 22nd November, 1870, and on the 19th of the following month one pavilion was occupied by convalescents transferred from Parliamentary Road. From time to time, as finished, the new pavilions were occupied, until on 10th March, 1871, there were no less than 366 persons under treatment. There were at that date in the two Hospitals 600 persons under treatment at one time. From a return furnished

to me by Dr. Russell, I find that up to 1st May of this year there have been 23,274 persons treated in these Hospitals. In this number are included cases of every form of epidemic disease known in this country, including Asiatic cholera. The results of treatment compare favourably with those of any Hospital in the kingdom.

“The possession of these large Hospitals is a peculiarity of Glasgow as compared with the other large towns of the kingdom. (Applause.) In London, Liverpool, and other large towns, the epidemic Hospitals are in the hands of the Poor-law Authorities. The Sanitary Authorities have no Hospitals of their own. The consequence is that either the Parochial Authorities have to exceed their powers by receiving persons who are not paupers, or a large class of patients is unprovided for. This is actually the result, because, naturally, people will not, in many cases, go to Parochial Hospitals who are not paupers, and in any case the primary duty of the Parochial Board is to provide for paupers, so that, as in the epidemic of small-pox, which is now declining in London, there may come to be no accommodation whatever for the non-pauper class. If we maintain our present number of beds—660—which, however, will require expenditure, owing to the temporary nature of the buildings, we may say that no city in the kingdom is so well equipped with Hospitals. (Applause.)

“The Hospital, which is now thrown open for inspection, is the first of a permanent structure we have erected. The history of its origin, as well as of the careful consideration which its plans received, is sufficiently indicated by the following extract from the Minutes of the Board of Police, under date 17th November, 1873 :—‘The Committee of Health reported the following extract from their Minutes—The Committee, having fully considered the subject of erecting an Hospital at Belvidere for small-pox patients on the site recommended in the report by Drs. Gairdner and Russell and the Master of Works, submitted to the Board on 9th September, 1872 ; and having examined the plans of the proposed Hospital, which had been prepared by Mr. Carrick, and keeping in view the complaints made against continuing the Hospital at Parliamentary Road for the treatment of small-pox patients, and relative reports by the Medical Officer, the Committee agreed to

recommmend that the erection of a Small-pox Hospital at Belvidere should not be further delayed, and the plans thereof submitted by Mr. Carriek be approved of, and the Clerk authorized to advertise for offers for the erection of the buildings.' The Board approved of this Minute, but in respect of the magnitude and importance of the interests involved, appointed Mr. M'Lellan and myself, along with the Medical Officer and Master of Works, to proceed to London and other cities in the kingdom where useful information regarding the construction of Small-pox Hospitals was likely to be obtained, and to report to the Board the result of the investigation ; and they agreed to delay proceeding further in the matter until that report was given in. In accordance with this resolution, the deputation visited London and inspected four of the Hospitals recently erected by the Metropolitan Asylum Board, also the London Fever Hospital, and St. Thomas' Hospital, as being the newest and grandest general Hospital in the kingdom, and the Herbert Hospital at Woolwich, as reputed to be the finest specimen of a pavilion hospital in existence. We also visited other cities and towns where Small-pox Hospitals were in operation, and reported to the Board of Police, with the effect of greatly improving the plans that had been prepared. The Board approved, and instructed us to submit them to the Board of Supervision in Edinburgh. This was necessary, owing to the erection of the Hospital being under the powers of the Public Health Act, which enable the cost to be spread over a number of years, whereas, under the Police Act, the whole burden falls at once upon the ratepayers. An assessment of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound on rental above £10 and $\frac{1}{8}$ d. per pound under £10 is levied, on the security of which £20,000 has been borrowed from the Public Works Loan Commissioners, repayable in 20 years, at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest. The plans were approved without alteration by the Board of Supervision on 13th June, 1874, ground was broken on 23rd November, 1874, and the first brick was laid on 16th February, 1875. I give no further particulars. That falls more properly to the Convener of the Committee, under whose care the work has been performed.

"I have thus hastily narrated the history of our Hospitals, and only incidentally referred to the work of the Sanitary Department, which had a bearing upon this, without whose aid, how-

ever, the Hospitals would not possess half their value. If you ask me for the fruits of their labours, I point you to the more favourable position which Glasgow now occupies amongst the large towns of the kingdom, as regards its health. (Applause.) I do not undervalue the effects of our Improvement Trust operations; they were also necessary to our success; but, at the same time, their efforts to ameliorate the condition of our overcrowded population would have been in a great measure abortive if change of residence alone had been effected. Our officers have been sanitary missionaries amongst the people, constantly inculcating and enforcing the laws of health. During the six years following Mr. Macleod's appointment as chief Inspector of Nuisances, his epidemic staff have made 1,366,708 house-to-house visitations, and in doing so discovered 14,200 cases of various infectious diseases. These cases are never lost sight of until removed to the Hospital, or, when circumstances warrant their being treated at home, until perfect convalescence there. (Applause.) What the effect of this careful supervision has been we cannot dogmatically assert. We know what the city has been in the past; we know what we are at present; but we do not know how different we might have been now had our action in the interval been different from what it was. It may be instructive to try our operations by a test of this kind. Let us take typhus fever—a disease which in days bygone was a constant scourge in Glasgow. I take typhus, because in no disease of the zymotic group are preventive measures so successful in arresting the spread of it. Early removal to the Hospital, or complete isolation of the patient, with disinfection of all infected rooms and clothing, invariably stamp it out. Let us take the five years that immediately preceded the opening of our Hospitals and the enlargement of our Sanitary staff, and contrast these years with the last five years, when our Hospitals and staff were in full operation. I cannot tell with certainty the exact number of typhus cases that were in the city during these periods, but I get from the City Chamberlain's reports the exact number of deaths from typhus that occurred in those years; and I know from the experience of our own Hospitals, and from other sources, what proportion these deaths bear to the number afflicted with the disease. I find the mortality varies from 9 up to 14 per cent.; I am, therefore, near the

average at 12 per cent. I find, then, that in the five years, 1861 to 1865 inclusive, there were 3994 deaths from typhus, which, on the data I have taken, shows that there had been 33,300 cases in the city. During the last five years there have been 553 deaths, which by the same calculation gives 4600 cases in the city. This shows a great improvement, and is even more than at first appears, for the number of lives at risk was much greater during the latter period. The average number of our population in the five years, 1861 to 1865, was 412,500, whilst in the years 1872 to 1876 it had increased to 520,000; so that if in the last five years there had been 42,000 cases and 5000 deaths, instead of only 4600 cases and 550 deaths, it could not have been said the city was getting worse. Here, then, is a saving of 4450 lives and of 37,400 cases of sickness in five years from this one disease. (Applause.) Surely we may be allowed to put a high money value on this saving of human life and of sick-bed charges to set against the expenditure of the Improvement Trust and Sanitary organization. (Applause.)

“And now, my Lord, I beg, in the name of the Health Committee, to hand over to you, as representing the Magistrates and Council, this property and these useful buildings; but whilst I do so, I at the same time beg of you not to keep them from us, for they are the right arm of our power—the first line of defence against the attack of epidemic disease. I counsel you to hand them over to the charge of my able lieutenant, Bailie MacLellan, the Convener of the Hospitals Committee, and I shall become bound for him and his Committee that they will in the future, as in the past, faithfully and earnestly administer these Hospitals in the best interests of our great community.” (Applause.)

The LORD PROVOST was sure all present would feel that they were very much indebted to Bailie Ure and the Members of the Health Committee for the opportunity they had afforded them of inspecting the new Hospital. He was also sure that the inspection would prove satisfactory to every one present.

He took occasion a few days ago, in the presence of the venerable President and a large number of the Fellows of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, to say that in these days Municipal Corporations charged themselves with many undertakings which were not formerly undertaken by Municipal Authorities; and

among these he referred to their arrangements for the treatment of epidemic disease. He thought the arrangements which the Health Committee had provided for dealing with epidemic diseases in Glasgow were equal, if not superior, to the arrangements of any other city in the country. They had now present with them the President of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, who would favour them with his own opinion on that subject.

His Lordship went on further to say that he was sure they had all listened with the greatest interest to the statement of Bailie Ure as to the diminution of epidemic disease in Glasgow; and while he was aware that there had been a great improvement in that respect, he was not prepared for the statement which the Chairman had made that the mortality arising from epidemic diseases had so greatly diminished during the last ten years, and which, he believed, was owing, to a very large extent, to the policy which the Board of Health, over which the Chairman had so ably presided for many years, had pursued. Even from the lowest, or money point of view, the advantage to the community from the diminished mortality must have been very great. The present Hospital has been erected under a loan from the Public Works Commissioners, so that the expense of the erection will be spread over a period of twenty years, and the charge during that time will not exceed $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a penny per annum on the rental of the city, and then the buildings will be free.

He would venture to suggest that the Hospital buildings might be thrown open for inspection by the citizens for a short time, and he felt certain that if the working-classes only availed themselves of the privilege it could not fail to remove any prejudice which they might have against themselves or their families being treated in the Hospital, should occasion require.

His Lordship said he had much pleasure in accepting the Hospital buildings in the name of the Magistrates and himself, but he did so only that he might hand them back again to Bailie Ure and the Members of the Health Committee. The Magistrates and Council were thoroughly satisfied with the administration by the Health Committee of their Hospitals in the past, and he felt they might repose every confidence in their management for the future.

His Lordship begged formally to hand over the charge of the Hospital from the Corporation to the Chairman and Members of the Health and Hospitals Committee.

Councillor M'LELLAN, in accepting for the Hospitals Committee the control and guidance of these permanent pavilions, desired to assure the Lord Provost that the Committee did so with a due sense of the responsible trust confided to it. That every effort would be made to aim at the greatest economy consistent with efficiency, and careful regard to the wants and comfort of the patients. He might say, in a sentence or two, that the whole arrangements for these pavilions had been the subject of long and earnest consideration. The plans were several times revised before finally deciding, with a view to fixing the most suitable proportions for the wards—the best arrangements for ventilation, heating, and disposal of sewage. The proportions adopted are—Length, 56 ft. 6 in.; breadth, 22 ft.; height, $16\frac{1}{2}$ ft. For the Acute Wards this gives for the number of patients who would occupy them in case of small-pox, 2050 cubic feet to each bed. But if occupied for fever one-fourth more patients might be accommodated with an air space of about 1500 feet to each bed. In the convalescent division the dimensions are—Length, 22 ft.; breadth, 24 ft.; height, $16\frac{1}{2}$, giving for small-pox conditions an air space of 1640 feet per bed, and for fever a proportionate difference. We had long and frequent consultations on the two important questions of the most advisable material to employ for the coating of the inner walls, and for flooring. Glazed bricks, Parian Cement, and Keene's Cement were those most recommended to the deputation in England. We had seen all in use and decided on Keene's Cement as being by general consent the most impervious to infection, because of its hard and polished surface. We saw in one large hospital in London wards where the Parian Cement showed such a porous surface that when it was tried to paint it the wall imbibed the material, leaving blotchy marks all around. The great objection to glazed bricks was that the joints, however well pointed, form crevices for the reception of dust and particles of infection. These, however, have been used in the mortuary and other places. We had no hesitation, after what we saw and heard, in adopting for flooring Dantzic oak, highly finished, in narrow planks of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. These will be

regularly waxed so that no impurities may be imbibed, while regular and frequent sweeping will obviate the necessity of washing the floors—the steam, damp, and smell of soap being most injurious and annoying to weak patients. Four means of ventilation are available, at the floor-level behind each bed, the air being detained over the hot-water heating pipes, by Boyle's ventilators in the roof, by open fires, and, of course, the through sweep from the windows on each side of the wards if required.

The administrative departments are accommodated completely within the boundary, and independent of the other Hospital. The stores, kitchen, and nurses' dormitories are on a scale sufficient to supply the wants of any extra number of pavilions which may be required under pressure, and for which there is ample room in the exercising grounds within the area; and the same remark I may say applies to the wash-house, stables, mortuary, and other offices. During the two years the buildings have been erecting much delay has occurred from strikes, and from contractors being unable to fulfil their engagements. The very wet weather also so long prevailing converted the surrounding grounds into small seas of liquid mud, greatly retarding operations. What you, gentlemen, have seen to-day, transformed by the Superintendent of Parks into a smiling garden, was until lately a pool requiring careful navigation on the part of those requiring to visit it, and we had to steer our way over slippery planks at the peril of a false step landing us over the ankles in sticky clay. I may only add, that none of the sewage from these pavilions will be allowed to reach the river. Arrangements are made for dealing with it all on the pan system, with suitable application of disinfectants. May I venture to express a hope that the suggestion made and approved, of keeping these buildings open for inspection by the public, will be largely taken advantage of by the citizens for whose special benefit they have been erected.

Mr. WILLIAM M'EWEN—"Would you allow me to suggest, that the interesting figures which have been submitted by Bailie Ure should be put in a permanent form for the information of our Council, and other Municipal authorities, and also for the benefit of our Hospitals and Parochial Boards. The result of the Sanitary work, and the doings of our Improvement Trust, might give

encouragement to other authorities to go and do likewise. (Applause.) I have examined with great care the Hospital, and have much pleasure in stating my satisfaction at the arrangements that have been made. During the many years I have been connected with our Infirmary, I have visited all the principal Hospitals in Great Britain, and very many in America, and am free to state that no town that I have visited has such good Hospital accommodation for infectious or contagious diseases. The airy wards and the facilities for giving recreation to the convalescent patients, are of great importance indeed. Before coming here I thought that our arrangements in the Royal for nurses' accommodation were the best in the country, but I am afraid I must change my mind, as I have never seen such excellent rooms for nurses as you have got here. And it is well this should be so, as these women are exposed in treating small-pox and fever to the risk of infection, and it is a good arrangement that they should have airy and comfortable bedrooms to sleep in when they are done with their work. (Applause.) The difficult part of nursing is to get those who will be satisfactory to the whole community. For my part, I have never had any difficulty. When I wish a nurse or a party to do a particular work, I look first to their qualifications. If the profession is Protestant, that is a recommendation; but the mere religious test has nothing to do with the fitness for the work. This, however, is a delicate matter, and in the present excited state of public feeling, it may be better not to discuss it further. One part of your arrangement, I think, is very good—the entire separation of your Laundry Department. Many years ago, when we treated small-pox and fever in the Infirmary, we were much vexed about an outbreak of the former disease in the Hospital, and though there was complete isolation, and no possible communication betwixt the different parties in the Hospital, we had a very serious outbreak amongst the patients, with a large mortality, and this compelled us to give up the treatment of this disease. Subsequently we discovered that the washing accommodation for the small-pox patients had got out of order, and that the laundry woman, in place of informing the authorities, had washed the clothes promiscuously, and this, I believe, accounted for the outbreak of

the disease. I cordially concur in the recommendation that the Hospital should be kept open, and the public invited to visit it. And as there are many of the working-classes who may be unable to go there upon week days, I would suggest that it should be kept open on Sunday, as it is of the greatest importance to remove all prejudice against parties coming here to be treated; and when the Hospital is once in operation they will be unable to get the information so needful now to have. I do not think that there is anything inconsistent with proper Sabbath observance in giving this facility, and as it is an exceptional case, I hope that the suggestion will be given effect to." (Applause.)

The CHAIRMAN—It must be very gratifying to the Members of the Health Committee, as it is to myself, to hear the highly favourable testimony that has just been given by Mr. M'Ewen of the suitability of the Hospital for the purpose it is intended to serve. There is perhaps no single member of our community that has made Hospitals and their administration so much a study as he has. (Applause.) As regards the suggestion made by the Lord Provost, and repeated by Mr. M'Ewen, that the new Hospital be kept open for a few days for inspection by the public, I highly approve.

It cannot but be gratifying to those who may at some time be brought here in sickness to have the opportunity of examining the excellent provision that has been made for their successful treatment. At the same time, I have to say that there is not now the same necessity for doing so that many may suppose, or as was felt at the commencement of our Hospitals. At first we had some difficulty in getting those above the pauper class to accept our aid, and in some cases had to use the compulsory powers of removal to the Hospital which the Public Health Act confers; but the kind and skilful treatment experienced by the patients soon came to be known amongst the classes benefited, and now the people come to the Sanitary Chambers asking that their sick be taken to the Hospital. For this state of matters we have to thank our excellent Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Russell, who was our first Hospital Physician (applause), and also, I would say, the other Medical Superintendents who succeeded him, all of whom have done what they could to make the Hospitals popular and successful. (Applause.)

Before sitting down, allow me to say that I am much pleased to see the President of the Faculty of Physicians here to-day. I sometimes think that his profession must owe me a grudge, for I have all through my public life been doing what I could to spoil their practice. (Laughter.) His appearance here we heartily welcome, and a word from him will be listened to with the greatest pleasure. (Applause.)

Dr. ANDREW BUCHANAN said, that having been called upon by the Chairman of the Health Committee, and by the Lord Provost, he would not refuse to say a few words—(applause)—but considering how many gentlemen had come away from town to their great inconvenience, and were anxious to get back, he would be very brief, and confine himself to three remarks. The first was, that the opening of an Hospital, of whatever kind it might be, must always be an object of interest and congratulation to the public. Most Hospitals were founded and kept up by private benevolence, but it was a matter of congratulation to the whole community that there were among them a certain number of wise and benevolent men, who looked after the sick poor, and procured for their fellow-citizens more indirect advantages of greater security to health, and advancement of medical culture, which every Hospital confers. His second remark was, that the Hospital opened to-day was quite different from a private Hospital, and a far higher subject of congratulation. (Applause.) It did not proceed merely from a few enlightened and benevolent individuals, but from the whole of the enlightened and benevolent public of Glasgow, represented by their Civic Rulers, and more especially by the President and Members of the Health Committee who have opened this Hospital, for the double object of giving proper medical treatment and nursing to persons labouring under infectious diseases, and giving also to the public of Glasgow the utmost possible security against the spreading of those diseases. It was particularly to be remarked, that the Hospital was not meant to be confined to the poor, but was open to persons of all ranks who choose to take the benefits it confers; a signal instance of which had been mentioned to him by the Chairman—that of a brave young lady, who happened to be attacked with an infectious disease at a time when she had no other residence than

a yacht, and not wishing to endanger the lives and health of her friends, who might have given her shelter, she came boldly out to the Hospital, where she remained till her health was restored. Dr. Buchanan's third remark related to the way in which the wise and beneficent intentions of the citizens of Glasgow had been carried out by the Health Committee. (Applause.) He could not speak of it in sufficiently high terms. He admired particularly the arrangement of the numerous compartments of the establishment, by which persons labouring under particular infectious diseases were kept quite apart from those labouring under other diseases of the same kind—Small-pox, apart from Typhus or Typhoid, and these again from Measles or Scarlatina. The whole Institution redounded in the highest degree to the credit of the Glasgow people, and the Magistrates who preside over them. (Applause.)

Mr. BURT proposed a vote of thanks to Dr. Russell, Mr. White, Assistant Master of Works, and the other gentlemen who had aided the Health Committee in carrying out all the arrangements of the Hospital. (Applause.)

Mr. WHITE acknowledged the compliment.

On the motion of Bailie THOMSON, a hearty vote of thanks was awarded to Bailie Ure for presiding.

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